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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/919,173	07/30/2001	Fred S. Miller	IL-9232	2631

7590

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EXAMINER

SIEFKE, SAMUEL P

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1743

DATE MAILED: 10/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/919,173

Applicant(s)

MILLER ET AL.

Examiner

Samuel P Siefke

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on RCE 9/17/04.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 11-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 11-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 11-23 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims **11-23** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daitch et al. (USPN 6,447,991) in view of Sigman et al. (USPN 6,645,908).

Daitch teaches a method of using a smart aerogel for detection of airborne contaminants. The method comprises providing a doped aerogel sample, passing an

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airborne contaminant (bioaerosol) through an aerogel sample, removing the aerogel sample and assaying through wet chemistry processes to determine how much and what kind of biomolecules the smart aerogel sample adsorbed (col. 8, line 63-col. 9, line 14). The aerogel sample can be made of multifunctional materials with unique properties that enable one to adsorb airborne contaminants (col. 1, line 55-col. 2, line 25; 3, line 31-64). The aerogel can be selected to render results as highly selective or relatively selective (col. 7, line 57-col. 8, line 28).

Daitch does not specifically teach crushing the aerogel before use, but does teach controlling the aerogel pore size. Daitch discusses aerogels having macropores larger than 100 nm in order to trap microorganisms. Bacteria and Rickettsia fall within the macropore range (col. 5, lines 11-59).

It is known in the art that crushing an object will create particulates which allow a greater surface area than the whole object. A greater surface area for adsorption is very much like providing an aerogel with macropores, capable of adsorbing large microorganisms. It would have been obvious to modify Daitch to include crushing an aerogel as an alternative to controlling pore sizes in order to provide an increased surface area for adsorption of microorganisms.

Daitch does not also specify that the aerogel is analyzed by observing a color change in the aerogel absorbate or detecting the airborne material by GC/MS. Daitch does teach removing the aerogel sample and analyzing the sample through wet chemistry processes to determine how much and what kind of biomolecules the smart aerogel sample absorbed (col. 8, line 63-col. 9, line 14).

Sigman teaches a sol-gel derived sorbent analyzing method that comprises analyzing a sol-gel sorbent by gas chromatography/mass spectrometer (col. 9, line 61-col. 13, line 4). It would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art to modify Daitch to detect the airborne material by GC/MS because it is known in the art of analyte detection that GC/MS methods are routinely used to detect and quantify unknown analytes in a sample.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Samuel P Siefke whose telephone number is 571-272-1262. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on 571-272-1700. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.


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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sam P. Siefke



September 24, 2004


Jill Warden
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700